

Soil & Seed Sermon 2024

I've just come back from a week in Central Australia at Docker River – they've had a lot of rain up north – most of the rivers are still flowing.

Basically, the all the deserts Green and full of life. I was driving along the Lassiter Highway – taking it all in - all this green grass as far as you can see. A policeman was following me. He pulled me over and asked if I had any idea why he pulled me over – they always say that - I said It depends on how long you were following me? He said I was speeding.

I said, I wasn't speeding, I was just keeping up with the traffic. He said, there's no traffic. I said, I know that's how FAR BEHIND I AM.

He said are you OK.

I said, I'm OK I'm just trying to imagine how many seeds there are on the earth. I said, I'm trying to work out if there are more seeds, or rocks, or stars. I said, when people look at the stars they wonder about God. **I look at the grass and wonder about God.**

I said, I've been wondering if there were more seeds than grains of sand on the earth. I said to him BTW (By The Way), *God says in Psalm 139: your thoughts are precious to me. They're so many! If I could count them, there would be more than all the grains of sand.*

I wanted to explain this, but I noticed he was gone – speeding up the road. I don't think he really wanted to know why he pulled me over.

But I was thinking about the grass.

Is this a serious question, are there more seeds, or grains of sand, or stars, in God's world? You would have to count the seeds, and the sands, and the stars, wouldn't you?

I have a mate, Rick who works for the Department of Something and he goes all over Australia counting the seeds. He has this square thing he just throws out on the ground and then he gets down and starts counting – then he multiplies the area by whatever and there he has it – all the seeds in that area. Then he goes back after 5 years and does it all again. It's all recorded – you can go to Flinders Uni and look it up.

In a way he could claim he has counted all the seeds in Australia.

How many seeds are out there?

(Wegner) How many seeds do you plant in a 100 acre paddock?

God blesses us with seeds and in the seed there is life.

Can you imagine most of central and northern Australia, an area way bigger than Europe, has had good rain and the seeds and flowers have germinated – **but there is no stock to eat the grass, and no people to look at the flowers,**

Remember 99% of the land west of the highway from here to Darwin is Aboriginal Reserve – no stock – just a handful of people.

If you want to have a look at all this nature you're supposed to have a permit.

Today we ask God to bless our seed, our soil, our crops, our livestock, our season.

What we're asking for is so, so, small – compared to the blessing already out there – with no people to see it, or use it, or enjoy it.

It's the argument used from the beginning of time.

If God blesses this great country over and over abundantly where 3% of the population lives - surely he will bless us here where 97% of the population lives.

Even God uses this argument.

“You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So, if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

If he blesses the deserts how much more will he **bless us here where it is all happening.**

Our text tells about seed falling on all types of soil – good and bad.

But what does it matter in this country?

When it rains there is so much germination – who cares about the rocky ground, the hard ground?

You know out of every nation of earth – and there were plenty of mighty and rich nations God chose Israel to be the home of Jesus.

Israel is the hard place, the rocky place.

He says in Duet 7 *“I chose Israel because you were the least of all the nations”*.

Israel is the one plant in the crop that has been trodden on, bent and broken, struggling, on the edge of the paddock under the shade of a tree – 1 bag per acre stuff.

Israel, that dull bluey green – the struggling plant.

Israel on the edge – the one the rabbits have chewed.

I chose you Israel for this very reason – because you were the least.

God choose this place to be the birthplace of Jesus.

If you want to see the heart of God – go to the rockiest place and see that plant growing out of nothing.

*Psalm 34: The LORD is close to the broken-hearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

Of all the rich and wealthy and blessed people in the world God says:

I am closest to the broken hearted and the crushed.

I am closest to Zacchaeus hiding in a tree than the crowds cheering Jesus.

I am closest to the crippled man, the blind person, the outcaste woman.

I am closest to the wandering refugee.

I choose to listen to those with no voice.

I choose to eat with those with no food.

I choose to die for those who are sinful.

This is what I was trying to explain to the policeman before he left – **must have had an emergency** - it seems so natural to look at all this green grass for endless miles and see God.

But if you really want to see God he says to look at the struggling plant in the rocks, and on the path,

I said I believe I am closets to God when I’m on the rocks, and in the hard places.

I think this is when he drove away.

We have to know that most of inland Australia which is now green will go brown and will burn.

We must use our blessing to be a blessing - or it will burn, it will be wasted.

Please try and learn and test my theory – ***If it makes sense it is of man – if it doesn't make sense it is of God.***

I chose Israel – a trodden on piece of grass in a rocky crag, surrounded by a good crop = I choose you because you were the least – but more so, I want you to know my heart.

God chooses even us – that doesn't make sense – It's of God.

God's grace – undeserved love – that doesn't make sense – it's of God.

Does this make sense:

Matthew 5:43-45: *"You have [heard it said], 'Love your neighbour' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike".*

That doesn't make sense – it's of God.

Evil people get rain – that doesn't make sense.

Before we complain too much listen to Paul: **Romans 3:23-24:** *"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins".*

Jesus dies for all people – that doesn't make sense – it's of God.

Lord – bless us, abundantly, overwhelmingly, so that we become your blessing in this country, in this community, to the very least of people we know. Amen